Policy Brief : National Nutrition Policy of Sri Lanka 2021 - 2030

The indispensable role of sustainable agriculture in food and nutrition security

Nutrition, as a maker and marker of development, is a foundation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs call for major transformations in agriculture and food systems in order to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition by 2030.

The shortage of essential products such as food, fuel, and agricultural inputs due to Sri Lanka's macroeconomic crisis has resulted in increased prices and disruptions to agricultural production. To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to establish policy pathways that encourage synergies and minimize trade-offs between hunger, poverty, nutrition, and climate change.

To realize the SDGs, the global food system needs to be reshaped for more productivity, more inclusiveness, environmentally sustainability and resilience, and able to deliver healthy and nutritious diets to all. A strengthened sustainable nutrition-sensitive food value chains are needed to improve healthy food availability and access.

Sustainable Food Systems

Sustainable food system:

is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised **(Food and Agriculture Organization)**

Key action areas

- **Increase production and diversity of crops** - To meet the demand of population growth and urbanization

✓ Improve land and labor productivity, along with access to financing and agricultural inputs
✓ Promote the production of nutrient-dense foods and nutrient-rich crop production techniques (e.g., bio-fortified crops, use of mineral fertilization)
✓ Promote Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), including time and energy-saving technologies and techniques for production, harvesting, processing, and storage
✓ Diversify agricultural production by promoting the cultivation of a wide range of nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits, vegetables, pulses, through incentives and technical support
✓ Empower all relevant stakeholders on food supply chain management (quality food production, and food sovereignty)

- **Reduce post-harvest loss** - Steps should be taken to minimize post-harvest loss by;

✓ Upgrading post harvesting technologies,
✓ Promoting appropriate transport and storage facilities for the supply chain
✓ Promoting linkages between farmers and markets to increase availability and affordability of nutrient-dense foods, obtain the best sale price, and ensure the maintenance cold chain, as needed

Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture

The food-based approach for agricultural development aims to overcome malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies by improving the nutritional quality of food. It emphasizes nutrient-rich foods, dietary diversity, and food fortification, while promoting a healthy diet and equipping the food system to deliver safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

Outcomes

- Stable year-round supply of nutritious foods, especially those lacking in diets
- Price stability and affordability of nutritious foods for most consumers
- Improved food safety and hygiene practices
- Increased appeal or desirability of nutritious foods

- **Promote sustainable Agricultural Practices** - to minimize harmful impacts on the environment, while maximizing the nutritional quality of food via;

✓ Organic farming reducing the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides
✓ Agroecology promoting natural resource conservation, and enhancing soil health through practices such as composting and crop rotation
✓ improving land use efficiency, irrigation and cropping intensity and promoting better use and conservation of soil and water
✓ Integrating pest management

- **Strengthen food security surveillance and research** - to boost agricultural productivity, incomes, and livelihoods

✓ Monitoring yield and quality of food, forecast production and imports, early warning signs of drought and famine
✓ Conducting studies to reduce yield gaps, increase crop yield potential and ways to reduce crop losses during harvest, storage, or processing

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD

END ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION

DOUBLE THE PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOMES OF SMALL-SCALE FOOD PRODUCERS

SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MAINTAIN THE GENETIC DIVERSITY IN FOOD PRODUCTION

INVEST IN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY AND

PREVENT AGRICULTURAL TRADE RESTRICTIONS, MARKET DISTORTIONS AND EXPORT SUBSIDIES

ENSURE STABLE FOOD COMMODITY MARKETS AND TIMELY ACCESS TO INFORMATION

HALVE GLOBAL PER CAPITA FOOD WASTE

ENHANCE RESEARCH AND UPGRADE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES